

KJA Bulletin

P.O.B. 4235
Mtn View CA. 94040



to:

Mr. and Mrs. E. Ovadia
2019 47th Ave.
San Fran. Ca. 94116

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

BULLETIN



THE KARAITE JEWS OF AMERICA

August 1983/Eiloul 5743

JACOB MASLIAH
PRESIDENT

To the members of our community
and especially the members of the board

I would like you to carefully read the Constitution of this congregation to understand the specifics of everyone's job, in order to carry on the assigned task with ardor, courage and faith.

Let it be an oath between us to shoulder this responsibility, accept constructive criticism and abide by the decision of the majority waving away all personal interest.

Promoting the Karaite ideology is one of our goals and is an everlasting duty.

The present generation is facing the challenge of assimilation. We should work hand in hand to prevent the extinction of this faith.

We own a past that we owe to our children. We shall not allow this past to be erased or altered.

You may consider this address as an S.O.S message which I mean to interpret as Save Our Sect.

May God be with us.

President

בשם השם נעשה ונצליח

IN THE NAME OF GOD WE WORK AND SUCCEED

When I met with Mr David Zaki Lichaa in Lausanne (Switzerland) and later in Paris with Mr Simon Szyszman (author of many published articles; and the writer of the book 'Le Caraisme'), they both gave me the same message in their own way. "...Tell your people to teach the children hebrew and learn how to interpret the Torah." said the former.

"...You need a scolar...a Hakham..." said Mr Szyszman. "How could we get or make one?" said I soliciting more details. He replied with a firm voice: "Lets talk about a young man starting the University .. If he is willing to study History and Theology and his family accepts and your community can financially bear the fees of his education for 4 years, I could have him admitted here in the Sorbonne and I will assist him and give him all the documents and the researches that I have pursued for 35 years. On his return, he will be a big asset to the community and will successfully lead you to a period of prosperity..."

As he was talking, my mind drafted a quick computation on the side. What does it take to support two serious students obtain their degrees in Paris?... answer: A total of \$ 2000/month . In other words it requires a \$50/month commitment from only 40 families.. What a bargain !

What if he doesn't become one. What is his future ? " He could then be teaching in the University . I am talking now about a man who had his education in one of the most respected faculties in the world." said Mr Szyszman .We then went on to more detailed discussion on the same subject that is beyond the space assigned in this talk.

On the day of my departure, I woke up on a phone ring and it was yet to be 7 am.. Mr. Szyszman's voice came at the other end with the same message "... do not forget to tell your people before it's too late..I have few more years left to live..."

As I was writting these lines, I remembered that Mr Szyszman, the last survivors of the Karaites in Poland ,did not have a phone. The dedicated man mus have walked up at 6 am to remind me..!

Friends, the ball is in our court. Moreover it is in our court for the second time. I was told when my moree (teacher) Ovadia Gamil visited the U.S.A that in the late fifties, the committee in Egypt has set aside funds to send 12 students to a Yeshiva abroad in order to allow them to earn the status of Hakhams.

Only 6 young Karaites applied.. The committee members then said "either 12 candidates or none..!" And it was none.Later as you know every Karaite was sent abroad.. Only the funds stayed..!

FROM THE BOARD MEETINGS

THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
THE GABBAY (DIRECTOR) AND
THE CHAMMAS (SERVITOR) OF THE SYNAGOGUE

Delegated to be shared by Fred Lichaa & Joe Moussa

In June's board meeting the forementioned members were chosen to assume all administrative activities of the Temple as listed below :

- 1- Coordinate the place of prayer
- 2- Coordinate the schedule of prayers .
- 3- Assure adequate supply of praying material like books, Torah, kippas, tallets, sheets...etc.
- 4- Distribute the Chabbat and Moed (feast) songs.
- 5- Insure that the practice of the prayers is kept within the ritual laws and context of our tradition.
(work with the acting Rabbi)
- 6- Encourage youngsters to attend and participate.
- 7- Implement such projects that will enhance and promote our services conditions .
(prayer book organization, translation ..etc)
- 8- Submit to the treasurer an estimate on the funds needed to sustain such plans.
- 9- Accept non cash donations related to the synagogue.
- 10- Supervise and delegate the responsibilities of the after prayer activities (e.g luncheons ..etc).

If you have any questions please contact :

Mr Fred Lichaa	Mr Joe Moussa
680 Matsonia Dr.	3491 Crestmoor Dr.
Foster City CA. 94404	San Bruno CA. 94066
Phone (415) 341-4725	Phone (415) 873-4491

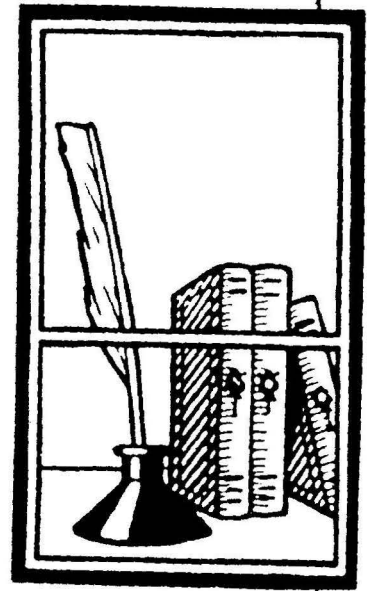
- The bulletin preparation was given to Joe and Raymonde Pessah.

- The fund raising committee was delegated to Alan Ovadia -Treasurer- and Mary Mourad -Board Member-.

- Joe Ovadia volunteered to implement the design of KJA seal.

From the Editor's desk

BY : RAYMONDE PESSAN



This is our second issue of the bulletin which we plan to publish bi-monthly. No doubt it is a rewarding and a tedious job. Rewarding to see such an overwhelming response and encouragement and to find the whole community working together to achieve the same goal. Tedious in the sense that our expertise is not in journalism or bulletin preparation.. so we will do our best and your help and constructive suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

We will pay full attention to your inquiries and give an honest answer in the section of Questions & Answers.

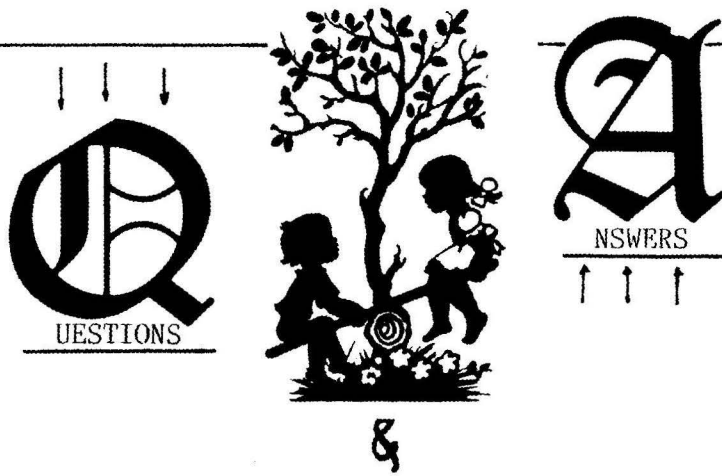
As this Bulletin signals its onset, we look back and pray that its fate will not be the same as the periodicals 'Al Kalim' or 'Karaimskaya Zhizn'.

Al Kalim was stopped soon after the Egyptians revolutionaries dismantled the Karaite organization of "The Youth in love of the Torah".

Karaimskaya Zhizn is a bulletin initiated by a Group of Karaite students in Moscow University but did not see its first birthday.

If you know of any one who would be interested in receiving the Bulletin, or would like to offer some material for publishing, please write to :

K J A
P.O.Box 4235
Mt. View, Ca. 94040



Q: I WAS NOT INFORMED THAT YOU HAVE FORMED A COMMITTEE AND ALREADY ELECTED A BOARD OF DIRECTORS ? I WAS NOT GIVEN THE CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE ?

A: The committee board has been elected hastily to be able to start the long and complicated process of registration as a non profit religious organization. All members are aware that they are temporary in their offices till the election date as stated in the constitution in 1984.

Everyone will be given the chance to participate.

Q: I AM VERY INTERESTED TO LEARN ABOUT KARAISM. WHAT BOOKS DO YOU RECOMMEND ? CAN YOU HELP ?

A: We all have a difficult time finding a book that tells the facts on Karaism instead of the opinion of the authors. We are doing something about that. In the next issue we will give book names and the means to obtain them. Also we are building our own library .

Q: HOW DO I SUBSCRIBE TO K.J.A BULLETIN ?

A: We are sending this bulletin to every family of Karaite origin that we know and we'll be glad to include others. Just write to the address on the cover. All labor to issue this bulletin is volunteered, however the mailing and repro costs are for the time being supported by a special donation. Contributions are not tax deductible until the receipt of the status of non-profit organization.

(Questions of common interest will be
----- answered in this section. Call
R. Pessah at (415) 941-2115 for input)

N E W S

- Shavouot prayers were headed by Mr Ovadia Gamil from Israel and was attended by over sixty people.

Mr Gamil who was then on a business trip in the U.S. has gladly changed his flight course to assume the Hazan duty on that Special day. He was very impressed and encouraged with our progress.

- Mr Jacob Masliah -President- visited Israel for 3 weeks conferring with members of the Karaite community and updating them on our status. He brought few Hebrew books that will go in our library.

- Ms Flore Mourad returning from a visit to Cairo presented a concerned and alarming report on the disappearance of many Karaites religious wealth from the Cairo synagogue.

- Mr Joe Pessah met with many Karaites in Switzerland and France. He brought back a lot of French literature on Karaism. Mr David Zaki Lichaa committed to support this bulletin by writing a section on our praying traditions and regulations. (translations pending).

- Planning for a wedding or a happy event..?! Tired of making phone calls to find addresses of relatives and friends..?! Why not write or call us to receive a computer label printout similar to what is affixed in the bulletin. (Nominal fee involved)

- Mrs : Doris Mourad, Suzie Darwish, Josette Selim and Sheila Pessah are actively involved in a series of translation work to be published in the section of YOU AND KARAISM.

- Mr Clement Masliah (Illinois) has rushed us a copy of a speech that he used to deliver in synagogues when they inquire about our sect. (Copies available on request). Mr Masliah mentioned that his audience was very responsive and that he believes many would join us if we organize ourselves.

- A special call from Dr. B. Massuda to several members of the board to congratulate and encourage them. Dr Massuda lived in the U.S for 70 years. He said he left Egypt when he was 15.. This is another member who is offering help and despite the years did not forget that he is a Karaite.

THE HIGH HOLY DAYS

The familiar cycle of the feast season initiated by Rosh Hashanah is not only the beginning of a hebrew new year but the front wave of a burst of Holy days of diverse implications and meanings. For instance right after the new year we count 'Aseret yeme harahamim' which are the ten days of the solicitation for mercy. I remember when ,in Egypt, we had to wake up in the middle of the night to go to the prayers for the Selihot . I was staying at grandma's home in the Hara to be closer to the sanctuary .My aunt who lived with her then would wake me up. Her neighbors and friends would eventually join in and suddenly activity would prevail in that dormant hive. Walking down the narrow street we would go in one group like a snow ball calling on many faithfuls to join .In the synagouge the emotional Selihot songs and the rivalry involved in reciting them would take care of keeping us awake. The fullfillment of this duty was soothing to our spirits. I was very young then ,yet the purification of the soul was nevertheless needed. Occasionally a mokhber - under cover agent- will pass by to assure that we were not gathered for political reason,then one of the assembly will go out to meet him and offer a cigarette.That kept the problems away.

At the conclusion of the selihot comes the Holiest day of the year , Yom Kipour ."Whoever hides his sins will not succeed but he who confesses and abandon them will find mercy." is one of the many verses recalled during repentance day. Everybody fasts, little boys too. The father of a five years old child who fasted till noon..beating a previous record is proud. Yom Kipour makes us exhausted, nonetheless ,it is the day ob served by the majority.

Soukot comes five days later.Many volunteers help to build the Souka in the backyard of the temple. This joyous feast which occurs in the autumnal harvest time is celebrated to comply with the Script ordinance to sit in the Souka for 7 days in remembrance of our fathers who left Egypt and lived in hastily built tents ,made out of palm branches for 40 years. Fruits of all varieties are hanged in the Souka. We sing and sample dates, grapes and pomegrenades after the prayers throughout Soukot time.On the eighth day, we welcome a very special day :

Simhat Torah - the rejoycing of the Torah.It has in our tradition a beautiful meaning: that of rendering thanks to the Lord Who gifted us His Book. We are also showing that we did not just take the Book and put it on the shelf. We taught our children. On Simhat Torah a colony of boys and girls parades the road to the synagouge,all dressed in white, wearing tallets,like angels with a kippa on the head. They have been studying throughout the year portions of the Torah and different paragraphs of the special thanksgivings prayers. Accompaning this army of God is a musical band drawing the attention of the crowd and paving the way with flowers till they reach the sanctuary. There it would look like a prom where all family members davin to watch their children's performance. To a passing by, the event looks like a religeous traditional wedding. Thus we called the boys 'Hatan Torah' groom of the Torah and the girls 'Kalat Torah' the bride of the Torah.

Yes.. this is what is known to you as Bar and Bat Mitsvah in the rabbanite sect, but done our way.

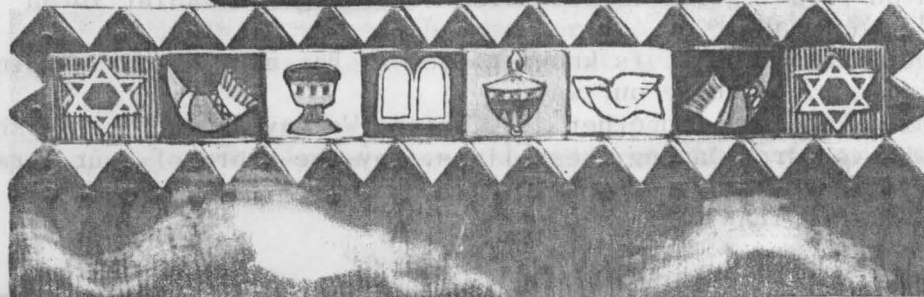
What kept us together ?.. Faith. We have something to share. That's whv you are reading these lines. May the charm of our prayers trigger your nostalgia.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 5744....!



לשנה טובה
To all of us

Happy
Rosh Hashana





C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S

מזל טוב

Mazal Tov...!

- To Yomtov and Danielle Hefez on the birth of their first baby boy Aaron , born on July 6, 1983 . The Milah was observed in a gathering of relatives on July 14 .
- On the 26th of June Nora Marzouk said to her future husband Joe Ovadia " I do " in a beautiful wedding ceremony. The couple were married in Rochester N.Y and moved to San Francisco to start their new life together.
- A special Todah Rabbah prayer was held in the home of Mr and Mrs Fred Lichaa to thank God on the miraculous recovery of their daughter Desiree.

תודה רבה

T O D A H R A B B A H

- From a grateful congregation to many faithful donors in support and encouragement of its movement.
May the homes of all our members be blessed with love and joy.

S Y M P A T H Y

זכרונם לברכה ולתחיה

OF BLESSED MEMORIES

- Passed away after a long illness Mazal bat Moshe Mordekhai (Fortune Moussa Mourad) on March 24th , 1983. She is the wife of Mr Marzouk Youssef Marzouk and was born on March 20, 1915 . Ebelot prayers were held in the home of her daughter Mrs Laura Mattatia (hazan: J. Pessah).
- Passed away on May 30, 1983 at the age of 79 Mr Moshe Neman Eziel (Moussa Amin Eziel) . Born in Egypt on October 22nd 1903. Mourning conclusion prayers took place in Temple Sinai. (hazan: F. Lichaa).